

REMARKS

The office action of September 28, 2006, has been carefully considered.

It is noted that claims 1-6 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Slater in view of the patent to Slater '480.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims presently on file differ essentially and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the constructions disclosed in the references.

Turning now to the references and particularly to the patent to Salter, it can be seen that this patent discloses a seal. This patent has been discussed at length in previous amendments and those comments are incorporated herein by reference. The following additional comments are provided.

The Examiner states that Salter teach that the second part of the seal is held in a pocket of the first part. The Examiner also states that Salter teaches that the first part of the seal has a cavity that accepts the second part of the seal. Applicant respectfully submits that the Examiner is incorrect in his reading

of the reference. The inner sealing element 38a of Salter, which corresponds to the first part 17 of the sealing arrangement of the present invention, has, according to col. 4, beginning at line 1, an angular end face 80 that transits into a cylindrical outer surface 82 that is coaxial with the axis of the seal. The second segment 38b is specifically laid on this cylindrical outer surface 82. It is not in the first part. It is not possible to lay set something in a cylindrical outer surface since there is no depression or pocket.

Salter further has a surface 84 that extends perpendicularly from the cylindrical outer surface. This perpendicular surface 84 only forms with the cylindrical upper surface 82 an L-shape. There is no formation of a pocket. At best Salter provides an L-shaped surface on which the second element can be laid. The perpendicular surface 84 prevents sliding of the second element 38b to the right in the drawing. The second element can be slid to the left. So that no sliding is possible the second element 38b as a complex L-shaped metal band 102 that is vulcanized or welded to the second element (see col. 4, lines 23 and 35-37) and accepts a screw 126.

The presently claimed invention, on the other hand, has a sealing element 17 provided with a pocket in which the second

element 18 is inserted. The pocket is best understood when viewed in cross-section. The pocket has a surrounding groove that is closed on two sides so that the sealing element 18 cannot fall out. There is no need for a screw or a metal strip attached to the second part as in Salter.

Only a pocket can hold the second element 18 securely so that it does not move. The present invention thus provides secure mounting with only two parts which are simple to produce.

According to Salter the second element 38b has a complex metal part that is vulcanized on, and a screw is necessary for final assembly. This is a much more complex and costly construction than in the presently claimed invention.

The patent to Salter '480 discloses a neck seal. The Examiner combined Salter '480 with Salter in determining that claims 1-6 and 8 would be unpatentable over such a combination. Applicant respectfully submits that neither of these references, nor their combination, teach the presently claimed invention. The pocket in Salter '480 is not in a further sealing element, but instead is in the bearing housing. The pocket is formed by a portion of the bearing housing 16 and two spring rings 14, 15. Thus, a large

number of parts are needed, together with their corresponding complex assembly, to form the pocket for the sealing element 1. The combination does not teach a sealing element that has a pocket in which a further sealing element is insertable, whereby further components are not necessary for connecting the sealing elements together or inserting one element into the pocket of the other. Furthermore, the combination does not teach spring reinforced sealing lips.

The Examiner also inferentially cites Pringle. Pringle does not teach a first sealing element having a pocket into which a second sealing element is inserted. The pocket of Pringle is not in a sealing element, but instead in a support housing. Furthermore, the seal of Pringle must be clamped to hold it in place.

Thus, the combination of references does not teach or suggest, nor do the references provide any motivation to arrive at, a construction having the features recited in the claims presently on file.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1-6 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over

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a combination of the above-discussed references is overcome and should be withdrawn.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with this application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 11-1835.

Respectfully submitted,

By



Klaus P. Stoffel
Reg. No. 31,668

For: Friedrich Kueffner
Reg. No. 29,482
317 Madison Avenue, Suite 910
New York, New York 10017
(212) 986-3114

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on February 28, 2007

By:


Klaus P. Stoffel

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